



How to Maximize Close Rates From Underperforming Reps

Underperforming reps can hurt the bottom line, but managers can't always give them full attention to build their skills and confidence. Learn how Quantified can help.

Properly managing underperforming sales reps has always been a challenge. As far as some significant businesses are concerned, the solution is as simple as promptly letting them go, as [18% of top-performing sales organizations](#) fire underperforming reps after the first quarter. For most mid-sized companies, however, radically increasing turnover creates a much higher burden on their hiring resources, which can reach a staggering [\\$115,000 per sales rep](#), according to research from DePaul University.

Companies simply don't have the resources to burn through underperforming employees, creating enormous pressure on sales managers to get their recruits up to speed faster and more consistently. In light of these facts, the market for sales training programs is understandably larger than ever — but to what end?

[Gartner research](#) has shown that B2B sales reps forget 70% of their sales training within the week, and 87% lose it after a month. It's almost certain the underperforming reps are *not* the few outliers who manage to retain the bulk of their sales training, making it another expense in the fruitless quest to bring them up to speed. While it's clear the solution is in better, more consistent sales training, it's long been unclear what that [revolutionary sales training](#) method should be.

In Sales, One Size Does Not Fit All

A significant shortcoming of generic sales training programs is their inability to specify which skills underperforming reps must work on. They often prescribe generalized training that is almost never at the point of most need. Sales decks, videos, and even field training isn't geared to their particular weaknesses, if their weaknesses are even identified at all. Most sales managers have no idea why their top salespeople are successful, much less why their underperforming reps aren't making the cut. Call quantity and frequency aren't good measures of the *why*.

Even for those managers who try for 1:1 training, more contact with their reps isn't a viable solution, as sales managers can usually only spend approximately

[15% of their time](#) coaching sales reps. Even if that low threshold can be pressed upward, more interpersonal attention is not always the proper response.

Sales managers who commit to providing individual progress reports or quick advice often address their sales reps' problems rather than reminding them of their control over the situation. Ultimately, the sales manager's job is [not to coach](#).

For organizations with a dedicated sales coach, the default method typically involves subjective approaches to soft skills training without an accurate way to measure them. In essence, even with a wealth of attention to spare, a lack of proper sales training technology often leads to educated guesses. It provides a poor frame of reference, if any, to the reps, failing to consider their specific individual strengths and weaknesses. No matter how hard the coach may try, they've traditionally had little more than personal advice, passive lectures, and generic role-play scenarios at their disposal.

Struggling to keep up, even the most dedicated sales rep cannot move forward without specific feedback on which of *their* traits, if boosted, will most quickly make all the difference in close rates. Instead, generic sales training gives generic answers that are not specific to the individual sales rep — meaning the solutions are not meaningful to them, let alone genuinely actionable. At worst, such efforts can even mislead them into what may be an ambitious and genuine desire to improve, although in ways that aren't the right fit for their unique range of talents.

In a word, what generic sales training lacks is intentionality. How can sales reps learn without an evidence-based direction and contextual answers to their specific questions?

Quantifiable and Contextual Training is Here

Cutting-edge data science, behavioral psychology, and artificial intelligence have converged, changing the game for sales teams everywhere. With incredible advancements in individually adaptive and self-contained sales training platforms, sales reps can train in more personally relevant ways whenever and wherever they want. This frees sales managers from giving the individualized attention they don't have time for.

Sales coaches can finally point to objective metrics for the crucial soft skills that make all the difference. They can identify and measure the behaviors of their reps and replicate those skills across their teams. And reps can access objective

skills assessments at their convenience, most often when they recognize a need. They get unbiased feedback to see where to focus their skills training and where they're doing well, with motivational next steps to develop those skills.

The result is that entire sales teams are now empowered to train individually with more meaningful, evidence-based procedures that identify and adapt to each rep's evolving needs. From a place of personal empowerment, the entire team can come together to focus on the bigger picture more confidently. This is no longer an idealized vision but a practical reality for those leveraging the leading edge of customizable digital sales training environments.

At the forefront of it are autonomous and self-correcting training platforms. With nuanced, quantifiable behavior detection and analysis, our [revolutionary, AI-based coaching platform](#) can zero in on the skills gaps at the heart of underperformance. Quantified offers integrations with Microsoft Teams and Zoom to assess actual calls, as well as realistic, live simulations for more life-like role-playing. Within minutes, advanced behavioral analyses of these calls and simulations give sales reps the ability to track and categorize even subjective communication metrics with quantifiable exactitude.

According to our research, this cutting-edge new training environment leads to lasting [skill improvements of up to 28%](#) after a year. Further, these improvements occur equally at the individual, team, and organizational levels.

Objective Measures of Performance

Rather than struggling to keep up with the pack, sensing a confidence-crushing trend of falling further behind, underperformers can immediately get contextual answers that are more relevant to their actual performance. They no longer need to compare themselves to crude averages or, worse, try in vain to advance their soft skills according to more plentiful but ultimately less relevant, complex skill measurements.

Instead, virtual training enables adaptable training simulations based around an extremely high number of the user's accurately measured communications attributes. Being precision-focused with near-real-time feedback and insights, Quantified provides over [1,400 behavioral signals](#), conveniently synthesized into 24 key features that drive human connection.

Without overwhelming the underperforming sales rep any further (as they are likely already feeling that way), the metrics that matter most to improving their closing rates are prominently displayed and correlated with critical conversations.

Broken down into four basic categories of communication, fundamental ["Communication-IQ"](#) metrics are highlighted according to the trainee's exact needs and the particular challenge scenarios of the live training simulation.

These categories include such qualities as:

- Eye Contact
- Facial Expressions
- Authenticity
- Confidence
- Tone & Emotion
- Articulation
- Persuasion
- Credibility
- Trustworthiness

Using Quantified, sales managers can now measure all these and more to create an authentic rating system that accurately reveals the precise qualities in which reps excel or underperform, giving prescriptive results to shape future training sessions. The result is a new standard for measuring communication that will serve as a beacon for the sales industry.

Adaptive Strategies That Impact the Whole Team

These mediums are helping top-performing reps do what they do best while giving under-performing reps much-needed clarity on precisely what they need to do differently. Further, coaches can fine-tune the individualized training protocols to emphasize those communication skills that lead to the highest close rates organization-wide.

Because the training sessions are individualized, trainers can individually compare the contextual relevance of the most successful qualities among the entire team. This ability enables coaches to upskill underperforming reps with greater precision and ease.

Realistic simulations are a game-changer for sales coaching. It's not only fun and engaging for the rep, but the avatar can be trained in specific industries and with certain products. The avatar gets smarter with every new video session.

Once the value of virtual sales training platforms becomes apparent, the feeling of "training" often gives way to something much more engaging. A sense of "gamification" takes over as reps compete to raise their scores faster than their peers, and they achieve certifications. Of course, at the other end of these scores is greater earnings, and the organization reaps massive wins.

Driving Greater Employee Commitment

As underperforming reps have a system that shows proof of their progress, their training scores will eventually blend into their sales performance. When the scores demonstrating greater mastery of their most effective attributes lead to higher close rates, the actual measures that matter most will start to inform their training, taking it (and their confidence) to the next level.

Hitting this parabolic rise in their training-performance-better-training feedback loop marks the precise moment when underperforming reps become valuable assets for their organization. The ROI per sales rep improves, employee loyalty rises, and the company culture grows into something extraordinary.

Even the utility of bare-bones data-tracking in an entirely digitized sales training process can work wonders to improve performance, as the sales rep can be elaborately tested on their progress at various points. By tracking their growth and quantifying their performance, the sales manager can determine which training protocols, timing, and other necessary elements most efficiently generate the desired effect. Even more importantly, it's done automatically and free of biased interpretations.

What once started as a temptation to expend more individuated attention on complex individual issues demonstrates the sales rep's increased capacity for self-correction. Individuated [technology-assisted sales training](#) accomplishes this through four main stages of growth:

1. **Training Assessments**, where the sales rep's current knowledge and range of skills must be evaluated, ranked, and compared with the benchmarks that are most important to the performance styles that matter most to their organization.
2. **Live Simulations** that radically boost the rep's level of experience before they "go live" with a real prospect. That experience is individuated, leading to enhanced focus on the communication skills that are most relevant to each sales rep.
3. **Reinforcements**, as growth and improvements, are demonstrated in precise, evidence-based measurements that the rep was directly involved

in at every stage of development. Reminders are timed at the most effective intervals for maximum skill retention with minimal stress.

4. **Feedback**, with real-time behavioral and speech analysis, provides specific performance information that encourages or discourages certain traits *precisely* as they occur. The result is immediacy in as close to a live environment as possible—and trainers can even deliver these "on-air" messages during actual sales calls.

Breaking the Barriers Between Training and Performance

Perhaps most significantly, Quantified's accurately measured feedback, delivered in real-time during training, will lead to demonstrable performance gains during live sales calls. A lasting sense of sales readiness becomes the natural result of activity in this way. Because the sales rep's training takes place in the same environment as the sales calls, it also helps them feel comfortable, leading to more natural communication and rapport.

Some advanced training systems can even be run *during* sales calls, revealing contextually relevant prompts at crucial moments in a live-call situation — and all without the client knowing. In these ways, the training platform has the potential to merge into a full-scale sales environment platform. Further, coaches can algorithmically mine recorded sales calls to almost immediately improve future training sessions. The result is a powerful feedback loop, where training measurably enhances performance, and managers can analyze a rep's best performances for better training protocols.

As Quantified produces greater results in training, it seamlessly leads to more significant developments in the almost identical sales call environment.

Redefining Sales with Automated Sales Training Technologies

With the advancement of AI and behavioral science, the almost endlessly complex nuances that drive effective human communication have been accurately codified and integrated into the sales training process. Underperforming reps have everything needed to guide themselves to mastery of the specific skills required to boost conversion rates as quickly as possible.

With Quantified's advanced, AI sale coaching platform with live simulations, the sky's the limit for any rep that wants to improve and maximize their close rates. Through a fully self-contained training protocol, sales reps can finally receive the objective, individualized feedback they require to improve their sales performance with self-directed purpose.

If you'd like to experience the benefits of the world's most advanced sales training technology, [request a demo today](#) and start adapting your training program to your sales reps' needs — not the other way around.